



Noor Rubani has collaborated with writer and founder of For Book's Sake Jane Claire Bradley to create *Noorie's Lightbulb Moments*, a zine sharing her learnings and reflections from life experiences as a young woman of South Asian descent with a commitment to social justice and personal growth.

"I have produced a zine about my journey learning and meandering my way through life. About learning what's right and wrong, and more importantly what's right for me. I wanted to inspire the younger generation, notably targeting a South Asian young female (as that is my own identity).

"Growing up, there was not a lot of material out there for me. I love to read and to broaden my horizons, and being a young person in Manchester I felt I was limited to aspiring to be like women who could not understand my culture and my identity. Therefore, though I found this zine difficult and a piece of my heart invested in it, I wrote it with the intention of sharing some of the experiences which has shaped me to be who I am today: 25 years old, healthy and happy, and continuing my social justice journey.

"During this process, I have learnt to strengthen my inner voice and the power that I can harness through writing and editing and reading feminist literature. My mentor, Jane, introduced me to inspiring books which I have had the pleasure of receiving through the kindness of 42nd Street. These books about self-love, inspiring female role-models, and 'rebel girls' have taught me that these women collectively have made it possible for me and my generation to come forward. I would like to take advantage of that and make space for the future generations to come.

“At times, I found it challenging to write my story down. I have learnt that the process is difficult. However, knowing that I have a support network, being accountable to someone motivated me to carry on, and that I hold the tools to drive this zine where it needs to go really helped my self-confidence in the prediction.

“Art is crucially important. I cannot stress this fact enough. When the world is in turmoil, when we are faced with a looming depression over our head - we turn to music, we turn to our favourite comfort TV shows, and we turn to our books. And it is only art that saves us.

“Last year, I was fortunate to be a part of the notable ‘Mother Tongue Other Tongue’ project where children from primary to sixth form can write original poems or a commentary piece about a famous poem. I had the privilege of going into schools all around Manchester to speak to young people and hear their views. Shocked, emotional, and instilled with hope is all I can say. I was shocked by the way the young people could articulate themselves. Emotional because they can see the suffering but feel helpless to do anything. And, finally I am hopeful. Hopeful because they are looking to change the world.

“Finally, I learnt that if a young person is given a chance to speak then you can open many possibilities for them. I was actually quite pleasantly surprised that so many young people were willing to speak to me and my colleague (known as the adults). They didn’t cause a fuss and they weren’t shy. They knew that we were recording their responses and they felt empowered to share their story. For example, a young girl (primary school) has come to Manchester with her family recently after fleeing the war in Somalia. She wrote a profound poem and drew a tree at the bottom of the page. We weren’t sure of its significance whereby we were told that this tree was where all the community leaders would gather to discuss the issues and solutions. I cannot even imagine what a huge culture shock she has come to terms with: living in a busy metropolitan city now.”